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AUTHOR	Todd, Joseph H.; Fisher, Thomas E.
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ABSTRACT

Described and evaluated is Ohio's Special Education Regional Resource Center Network. Discussed are background information, funding structure and goals of the two major components (Program Planning and Development Centers and Instructional Resource Centers) as well as such other components as research and development projects. Reported is a 1974 Instructional Resource Center evaluation which consisted of a mail survey of 695 special educators' awareness and use of the Centers and in reactions from site visits. The evaluation includes the following findings: the centers were valued by all special educators surveyed, materials borrowing and training assistance were ranked as the most helpful services, and priority in future services was assigned to installing a computer terminal at the school to receive educational prescriptions for individual children. Appended are the seven service areas found in the mail survey and a list of site visitors. (CL)

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OHIO'S SPECIAL EDUCATION REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS

Presented to

Superintendent's
Advisory Council

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FEBRUARY 4, 1975
SCOT'S INN
COLUMBUS, OHIO

Ohio Department of Education
Division of Special Education
933 High Street
Worthington, Ohio 43085

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PART I

OHIO SPECIAL EDUCATION

REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTER NETWORK

Prepared under the direction of

S. J. Bonham, Jr., Director

by:

Joseph H. Todd
Assistant Director

Thomas E. Fisher
Educational Administrator
ALRC-RRC

A. Background

In 1969, in a major management reorganization, the Division of Special Education recognized that a State agency cannot successfully relate to each individual teacher, supervisor, and school district. Federal funds were used to create a new linkage between the State and the school districts.

B. Funding: Structure and Priorities

Under the state plan adopted by the State Board of Education, the Ohio Department of Education has used Federal funds under Title VI-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (now known as Title VI-B of the Education of the Handicapped Act) to fund regional centers to:

1. Assist local school districts in the initiation and expansion of programs and services for handicapped children through joint planning and cooperation among school districts in a region to serve an increased number of handicapped children; and,

2. Provide local school districts with resources designed to improve the quality of instruction for handicapped children through the delivery of instructional skill training to teachers based on newly developed instructional materials and methodologies.

The following funding priorities were established:

Priority 1 To serve school aged handicapped children who are not currently attending school.

Priority 2 To serve handicapped children enrolled in a regular school program who are receiving no special education services.

Priority 3 To serve handicapped children in a special education program when the program is incomplete, unduly restrictive, or lacks quality to such an extent that the child's opportunity to achieve appropriate educational objectives is obstructed.

These two concepts and related priorities were developed separately beginning with the summer of 1969 when nine Program Planning and Development Center projects and eight Instructional Material Center projects were initiated. During this first year of funding the PPDC projects served 139 school districts and 22,600 handicapped children within the State. The eight IMC projects served 178 school districts and 36,000 handicapped children. Since 1969 these projects have been

merged to form Special Education Regional Resource Centers (SERRC). The evolved purpose of these Centers has been to assist local districts in the development, coordination, and management of comprehensive, quality programs and services for handicapped children with unserved handicapped children as a priority.

Each Center functions through a participatory management system based on a Governing Board composed of superintendents from the cooperating districts. Currently sixteen SERRC's provide services to all school districts in the State of Ohio and all handicapped children enrolled in those school districts (see Map, page 3).

C. Major Components of Ohio Special Education Regional Resource Centers

The primary service components made available through Title VI-B funds have been directed toward establishment of Program Planning and Development Centers (PPDC) and of Instructional Resource Centers (IRC). (See Table of Organization, page 4.) The major goal of the Centers is to provide assistance to local school districts in achieving equal educational opportunities for handicapped children by coordinating resources and planning expansion of program and services.

1. Program Planning and Development Centers

Goal: Achieve equal educational opportunity through coordinated resources and planned expansion of programs and services with primary emphasis upon unserved handicapped children.

Objectives: Assist school districts in development of a comprehensive Master Plan for special education.

Encourage the development of special education programs and services which can be more effectively operated at the multi-district level.

Provide technical assistance to schools in utilizing multiple resources toward the achievement of common educational objectives.

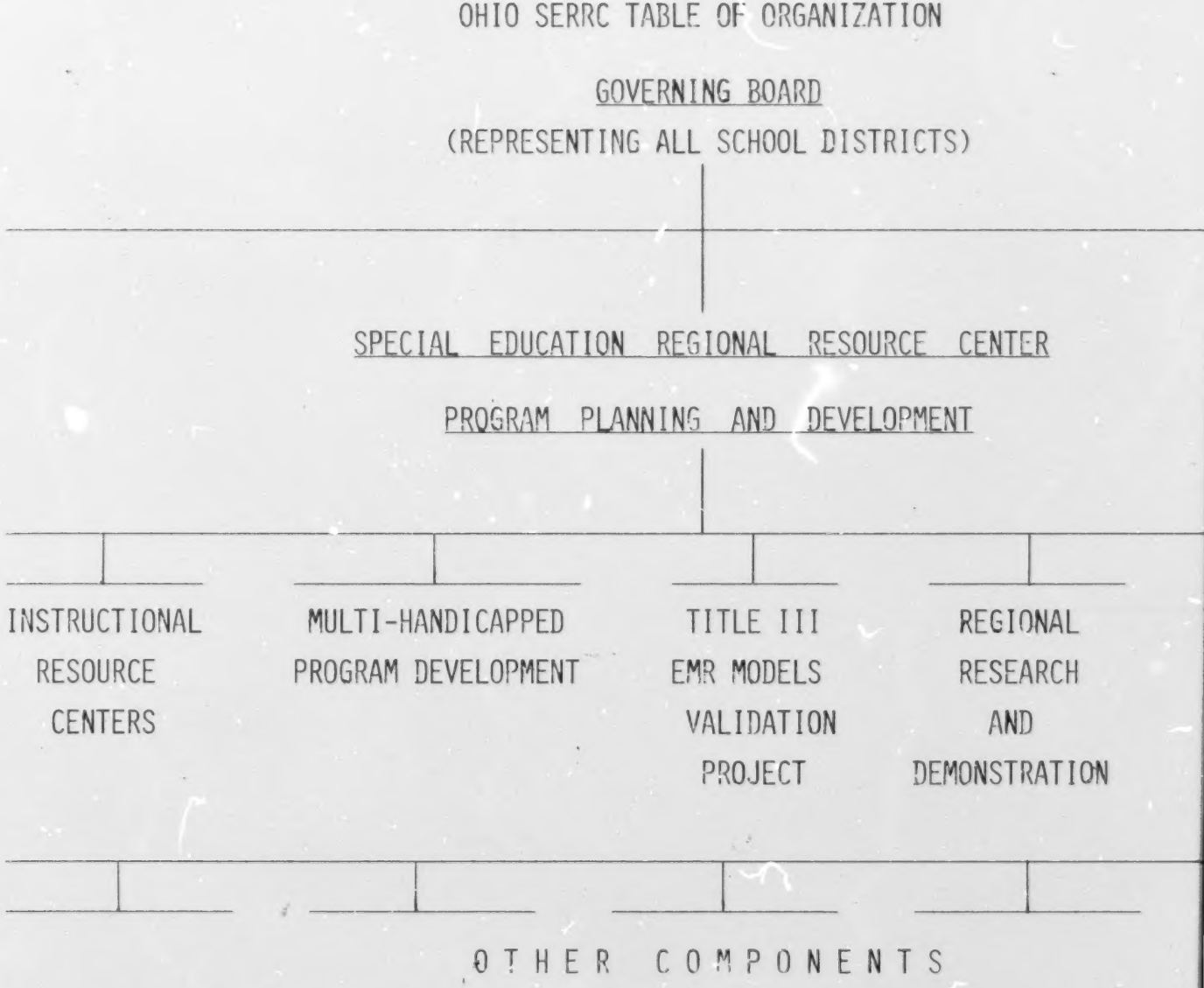
Serve as an information dissemination center for administrators, teachers, and parents.

Develop a community awareness of the educational needs of handicapped children.

Assist school districts in obtaining the resources necessary to implement their plans.

In the 1971-72 school year the SERRC PPDC component assisted

MAP OF OHIO SERRC NETWORK REGIONS


OHIO SERRC TABLE OF ORGANIZATION
GOVERNING BOARD
(REPRESENTING ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS)
SPECIAL EDUCATION REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS
MULTI-HANDICAPPED PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
TITLE III EMR MODELS VALIDATION PROJECT
REGIONAL RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATION
OTHER COMPONENTS

OHIO SERRC TABLE OF ORGANIZATION

GOVERNING BOARD

(REPRESENTING ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS)

AL EDUCATION REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

NDICAPPED
EVELOPMENT

TITLE III
EMR MODELS
VALIDATION
PROJECT

REGIONAL
RESEARCH
AND
DEMONSTRATION

LOW INCIDENCE
HANDICAPPED
COORDINATION

OTHER COMPONENTS

school districts within their respective regions in the development of objectives based upon priorities established by the participating school districts which interfaced with statewide priorities developed through the Division of Special Education planning efforts. Each SERRC PPDC component submitted a Master Plan to the Division of Special Education in the spring of 1972 which reflected program needs and the systematic utilization of local, State, and Federal resources to satisfy those program needs during the 1972-73 school year. This planning was done utilizing a systems approach which focused upon seven areas of information. These seven areas produced information regarding: (see Model, page 6)

a. The identification of current status of special education programs and services within the region.

b. A definition of problems and needs within the region.

c. A definition of regional goals.

d. An analysis of resources currently available and resources for future development.

e. Identified specific objectives with target dates for implementation.

f. Projected procedures to be followed outlining the major steps for achieving the identified specific objectives.

g. Established evaluation procedures to determine the degree to which the objectives were met.

During the 1972-73 school year the PPDC's played a key role in assisting local school districts in meeting the requirements of new mandatory planning contained in Section 3323.011 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The mandatory planning law required that every Ohio school district either individually or in cooperation with other districts adopt a plan for all handicapped children which made provision for:

a. An organizational structure and necessary staffing for the identification and placement of handicapped children in appropriate programs;

b. An organizational structure for the necessary supervision and staffing of programs and services for handicapped children;

MODEL

PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROG

IDENTIFICATION CURREN
SPECIAL EDUCATION PR
SERVICES -- MAP AND
CURRENT STATU

DEFINITIO
AND

REGIONA

ANALYSIS OF RESOURCES:
A. PRESENTLY AVAILABLE
B. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIFIC
OBJECTIVES WITH TARGET
DATES

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES
BY MAJOR STEPS -- PROJECTED
ACTIVITIES BY YEAR

IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL
OBJECTIVE EVALUATION
AND RECYCLE

MODEL

ENTATION AND EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

EGIONAL
ATION

DURES
CTED

CIFIC
RGET

IDENTIFICATION CURRENT STATUS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES -- MAP AND DESCRIBE CURRENT STATUS

DEFINITION OF PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

REGIONAL GOALS

ANALYSIS OF RESOURCES:
A. PRESENTLY AVAILABLE
B. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

c. The necessary programs and services needed to meet the educational needs of every handicapped child in the school district in accordance with program standards and eligibility criteria established by the State Board of Education.

This planning effort will continue to allow for a more effective and efficient utilization of resources for the education of handicapped children in Ohio.

2. Instructional Resource Centers (IRC)

The original Ohio concept has evolved from the traditional Instructional Material Center with emphasis upon materials to the present Instructional Resource Material Centers as an attempt to relate Instruction to Materials. Currently, Ohio is attempting to continue the trend of creating Centers for the coordination of Instructional Resources. This concept focuses upon working with other resource personnel such as the supervisory network and the pupil personnel specialists, as well as with teachers on an individual and small group basis.

Goal: Improve the quality of special education programs and services.

Objectives: Implement a comprehensive plan for the delivery of instructional skill training with emphasis on diagnostic teaching and behavioral approaches to be utilized by teachers of handicapped children.

Initiate small group meetings, workshops, seminars, and service consultations directed at the improvement of teaching methods.

Assist teachers in the development of instructional materials and curriculum innovations.

Assist supervisors and pupil personnel specialists in developing plans for the effective utilization of IRC resources, i.e., materials, consultations, etc.

Disseminate information regarding continuing education opportunities, instructional technology, and special education program trends.

Assist superintendents and teachers in developing instructional and behavioral strategies and performance objectives.

3. Other Resource Center Components

In addition to PPDC's and IRC's other operating components are being developed in many Special Education Regional Resource Centers. These components operating in one or more Special Education Regional Resource Center are based upon the regional governing board's assessment of local and regional special education needs.

a. Research and Demonstration Projects

Research and Demonstration projects funded with Title VI-B funds as well as other funding sources may be developed with the resources available in a Special Education Regional Resource Center. Such projects may operate as a Center component. These projects represent a consensus of regional needs and generally can be expected to have maximum impact beyond the duration of Federal funding.

b. Teacher Training Projects

Projects have been developed based upon school districts' assessment of their teacher training needs. Three projects were funded under Title VI-D; two in Learning Disabilities involving seven regions, and one in Hearing Impared involving six regions. Such projects involve the active participation of university personnel, pupil support services, teachers, and children in the acquisition of new skills. While university credit is often a secondary benefit to the teacher participant, project activities are focused upon achieving desired changes in the classroom.

c. Educable Mentally Retarded Models Project

This project is funded under P.L. 91-230, Title III, in one region with satelites in eight other regions. The purpose of this project is to: (see Service Continuum, page 9)

1. Develop behavioral objectives in fourteen major learning areas.

2. Validate efficient and effective program models.

3. Provide a valid basis for development of a continuum for the delivery of services to handicapped children.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

CONTINUUM

REGULAR CLASS MODIFICATION	INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
	BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION
	RESOURCE CONSULTANT
	PSYCHOLOGIST
	TEACHER AIDES
SUPPLEMENTAL INTERCESSION	SPEECH THERAPY
	COUNSELING
	TUTORING
	OUTSIDE AGENCY
	RESOURCE ROOM
	SELECTIVE SUBJECT PLACEMENT
	HALF-TIME PLACEMENT
SELF-CONTAINED CLASS	FULL-TIME
OUTSIDE SCHOOL PLACEMENT	HOSPITAL
	CLINIC

d: Other Potential Components

Other components have been developed based upon specific areas needs. These are to:

1. Coordinate, consult, or provide technical assistance to pupil support services.

2. Develop more effective and efficient methods to serve physically handicapped children, including the home bound within the region.

PART II

EVALUATION OF SERRC'S

Continuing support for the SERRC network which has been demonstrated by administrators, special educators, and parents confirms that the Centers are providing a viable service. While each project benefits from an end-of-year evaluation, a further evaluation by a third party can be extremely productive. Such a study was conducted with the IRC network in 1974 by Policy Studies in Education. The final statewide report of this study, contained on the following pages, corroborates the viability of the IRC network and provides valuable information regarding the future development of IRC services.

PART III

A STUDY OF THE OHIO SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS

A REPORT TO THE

DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATE OF OHIO

Submitted by:
Policy Studies in Education
52 Vanderbilt Avenue
New York, New York 10017
(212) 684-6940

A Department of
Educational Research Council of America

Project Director

Henry M. Brickell

Associate Project Director

Susan Wong

Research Assistant

Rena Grossman

June, 1974

BACKGROUND

History of Instructional Resource Centers

In 1969, the Ohio State Department of Education, Division of Special Education, made a concerted effort to improve special education for children of Ohio through creating and funding 17 special education projects--nine Program Planning and Development Center (PPDC) projects and eight Instructional Materials Center (IMC) projects. The purpose of the PPDCs was to assist the local school districts by coordinating special education resources and by planning for expanded programs and services within their regions. The purpose of the IMCs was to develop and/or provide materials for special educators in order to improve the quality of special education programs and services within their regions.

The Division initially conceived of and funded PPDC and IMC projects separately. Recently, the Division combined the projects administratively through creating 16 Special Education Regional Resource Centers (SERRC). The 16 SERRCs, which blanket the entire State, perform all of the functions originally conducted by the separate PPDC projects and the IMC projects. The PPDC component of SERRC continues to serve special educators through providing planning and design skills. The IRC component, an expansion of the original IMCs, now provides services primarily in these areas:

1. Training special educators
2. Collecting and distributing special education materials
3. Collecting and distributing information about special education materials
4. Modifying/developing special education materials

Background of the Study

In March, 1974, Policy Studies in Education (PSE), a not-for-profit educational research organization in New York City which is a department of the Educational Research Council of America, was selected by all of the 16 SERRCs to conduct a study of all of the 16 IRCs.

At that time, PSE proposed that an assessment of each IRC would be beneficial at the local, regional, and State levels. In order for the services provided by each IRC to become increasingly helpful to special educators in each region, local, regional and State officials must first know which IRC services are most successful in the eyes of those it serves. At the local level, special educators could benefit by learning how other special education staff are being served within the region. At

the regional level, the SERRC Governing Board, the PPDC Director, and the IRC Coordinator would benefit by knowing which IRC services appeal to and are valued by IRC users. At the State level, the Division would benefit by having information to assist it as it makes management decisions about a federally funded program of such scope.

PSE proposed to conduct a study of the 16 IRCs simultaneously, producing a profile of user activities and user preferences for each region and, by combining the data, providing a profile of IRC user activities and user preferences statewide. Thus, the 16 regional reports and the State report would be useful to each region and to the Division.

Background on the IRCs

The 16 Instructional Resource Centers are designed to serve the entire State. There is, however, wide variation in size of geographic areas and size of populations served as demonstrated by the table on page 15.

The funding for the Instructional Resource Centers originates from the HEW Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped and is administered by the State of Ohio, Division of Special Education. The Division assumes overall administrative responsibility for the Centers.

Most IRCs, which are located in local school districts, are staffed by one or two professionals and one or two clerks. In almost all cases, the IRCs operate under the guidance of a Governing Board and work jointly with the Program Planning and Development Center on some aspects of IRC operations. The IRCs work closely with special education supervisors statewide, and, in that way, establish a link between the IRCs and the many teachers they are trying to serve.

The IRCs provide the following services, listed in order of emphasis, to special educators in their regions:

1. Training special educators
2. Collecting and distributing special education materials
3. Collecting and distributing information about special education materials
4. Modifying/developing special education materials

Areas Served by the IRCs

Regions	No. of Counties Served	No. of Special Educators	*All Students (ADM)	**No. of Handicapped Students	No. of Speech Impaired Students
Central	7	925	265,918	9,427	11,040
Clinton, Adams, Brown, Fayette, and Highland	5	136	36,296	1,392	1,863
Cuyahoga	1	846	316,435	8,488	12,742
Dayton-Miami Valle	6	728	241,916	6,780	10,707
East Central	10	317	107,111	3,500	3,657
Lake and Geauga	2	161	62,707	1,307	3,450
Lorain, Erie, and Huron	3	275	97,896	2,799	4,278
North Central	7	283	90,461	3,068	4,267
Northwest	13	766	223,401	7,532	10,453
Scioto, Lawrence, Pike, and Ross	4	196	53,824	2,359	1,714
Southeastern	10	237	65,338	2,406	3,404
Southwestern	4	869	276,533	8,541	11,500
Stark, Columbiana, and Wayne	3	484	132,250	5,351	6,222
Summit, Medina, and Portage	3	493	177,962	4,551	6,980
Trumbull, Ashtabula, and Mahoning (Northeastern)	3	414	141,711	4,510	5,474
West Central	7	260	81,819	2,842	3,577

*Numbers of special educators and students served were supplied by the Division of Special Education.

**Does not include speech impaired.

CONDUCTING THE STUDY

In order to assess the impact of all 16 IRCs on special educators across the State, PSE used two methods of gathering data:

1. A mail survey
2. Site visits

The Mail Survey

PSE, working together with IRC staff in each region, randomly selected special educators as potential questionnaire respondents. Each potential respondent was mailed a questionnaire designed to gather the following kinds of information:

1. Background
2. Awareness of training, materials, and resources
3. Accessibility of training, materials, and resources
4. Sources used in getting training, materials, and resources
5. Use made of training, materials, and resources
6. Value placed on training, materials, and resources

Developing the Questionnaire. PSE developed a questionnaire to be completed by special educators which included a series of questions addressing the areas mentioned above. The questionnaire was reviewed and revised by Division staff and by selected individuals in order to insure that the data gathered would accurately reflect the focus of the Ohio IRCs. The questionnaire was then coded for data analysis purposes in order to facilitate the keypunching, verifying, and processing of the data.

Appointing the Study Coordinator. PSE asked each IRC Coordinator to designate a Study Coordinator--someone who would assume responsibility for tasks to be performed within the region. The Study Coordinator, who was in most cases the IRC Coordinator, worked closely with PSE project staff in selecting the questionnaire respondents, arranging the site visits (described later), and conducting follow-up activities for the mail survey. We would like to say once again how appreciative we are of the time and effort each region devoted to this study. All tasks were conducted in a collegial spirit which is particularly impressive considering the short amount of time we had for gathering the data.

Selecting the Sample. PSE provided specific instructions to each Study Coordinator who then selected a random sample of special educators in his or her region. Potential questionnaire respondents were chosen from the following four areas of special education:

1. Educable Mentally Retarded
2. Learning and Behavioral Disabilities
3. Psychological Services/Speech, Language and Hearing
4. Low Incidence Handicaps (hearing impaired, visually impaired, severe and/or multiple impairments, orthopedically handicapped)

The areas were determined jointly by PSE and the Division. The sample was drawn from school districts served by each regional IRC and identified by region for purposes of preparing the regional reports.

Conducting the Mail Survey. The mail survey was originally scheduled to be conducted as follows:

Dates (1974)	Person(s)	Activities
March 26	PSE	Sends Study Coordinator the Instructions for Selecting Respondents for the Mail Survey
March 29 - April 5	Study Coordinator	Selects respondents in the region using the Instructions
March 29 - April 5	Study Coordinator	Prepares his/her own covering letter to accompany each questionnaire
April 5	PSE	Ships questionnaires, plain manilla envelopes, return envelopes addressed to PSE, and PSE covering letters to Study Coordinator
April 8-10	Study Coordinator	Forwards to each respondent his/her covering letter, PSE covering letter, a questionnaire, and a return envelop
April 11-19	Respondents	Begin to complete questionnaire and return them to PSE
April 22	PSE	Sends preliminary "control form" to the Study Coordinator showing number of respondents in each category who have returned questionnaire to date

Dates (1974)	Person(s)	Activities
April 23-25	Study Coordinator	Conducts follow-up activities to increase response rate
April 22 - May 10	Respondents	Continue completing and returning questionnaires
May 13	PSE	Sends a final control form to each Study Coordinator showing the total number of respondents from the region

Extending the Time for the Mail Survey. The work began on schedule but a variety of circumstances made it seem advisable to extend the survey time: many IRC staff members were scheduled to attend the Council for Exceptional Children convention which occurred during the time of the survey; teachers were out of school for spring recess; and so on. As a result, PSE sent the preliminary control form to each region only after a reasonable number of questionnaires had been received (May 7 rather than April 22) and did not terminate the survey until June 4 rather than May 13 to allow for late returns. Thus, the mail survey was extended three weeks to allow both the Study Coordinator and the respondents sufficient time to conduct the necessary tasks.

The Response Rate. In spite of the problems cited earlier in conducting the mail survey, 53 percent of those who were asked to complete the questionnaires did so. A total of 695 special educators reported their use of the IRCs, gave their feelings about current services, and voiced their preferences about future services.

Their responses were analyzed and reported region-by-region in the 16 regional reports; they are combined in this statewide report. The 695 respondents appear to be a broadly-representative cross-section of IRC users. They come from all 16 regions; they are located at varying distances from their IRCs; they work in all areas of special education; they work with children of all ages; and they represent the full range of teaching and administrative experience in special education.

Analyzing the Data. All respondent data collected during the mail survey were key-punched and verified. Following this process, PSE generated frequency distributions and cross tabulations for each of the 16 regions and for the State as a whole. PSE then analyzed and synthesized the data so as to produce readable, interpretable reports.

The Site Visits

PSE arranged for two site visitors to visit each IRC for two days. The visiting groups consisted of PSE staff and/or selected outside consultants familiar with training special educators and with the use of

materials and other resources in special education classrooms. (See Appendix for list of site visitors.) Each site visit was arranged jointly by PSE and each regional Study Coordinator according to instructions provided by PSE. The instructions specified dates and times as well as people to be interviewed individually or in groups, records to be examined, materials to be reviewed, classrooms to be visited, and so on.

Developing Interview and Assessment Guides. PSE prepared an interview guide and an assessment guide for use during the site visits. The interview guide included a series of questions for IRC staff, special educators, and school administrators. The assessment guide included items to be completed by the site visitors after each two-day visit. Both guides were designed to reflect the objectives and activities of the IRCs as communicated to PSE earlier by the Division and by a group of IRC Coordinators who kindly contributed topics and ideas.

Conducting the Site Visits. PSE encouraged each Study Coordinator and other staff members to observe the site visit activities and sit in on interviews if they so desired. We hope that the information gained by listening and observing was helpful to local program staff members.

Analyzing the Data. All interview and assessment data collected and recorded during the site visits were synthesized and reorganized according to major topic headings, primarily for use in each of the 16 regional reports. These data were analyzed to assess the scope of the activities conducted by each IRC as observed at the IRC itself and to determine the impact of the IRC activities on the various individuals and groups interviewed.

Preparing the Reports

PSE prepared and submitted the entire set of 16 regional reports before preparing and submitting this statewide report. This report is based on the findings of all 16 regions. Thus it presents an overview of the progress and prospects of the entire IRC network in Ohio.

This statewide report is true to the data contained in the 16 regional reports, but it goes beyond those data. It is specifically designed to provide the Division with a "view from the top." For that reason, the data contained in the 16 regional reports is not summarized here. Instead, this is a brief management report designed for decision-makers. Most of the substantiating data are contained in the 16 regional reports.

DO THE USERS LIKE THE IRCS?

Definitely. A heavy majority of all special educators like the IRCs and find their services useful. Most of them find the IRCs responsive and sympathetic and their materials and services practical and current.

However, many special educators do not find the IRC materials and services cover the broad span of their needs. (More about that later.)

EMR teachers (who constitute about 35 percent of all special educators who completed the questionnaire) are most pleased with the IRCs; LBD and PS/SLH teachers (who constitute about 45 percent of the total) are almost as pleased, expressing more doubt about the breadth and currency of IRC offerings; the remaining 20 percent of special educators are least pleased yet a clear majority like the IRCs and find their services useful and their staffs sympathetic and responsive.

In short, all groups of special educators surveyed like the IRCs and what they are getting from them. Their only complaint seemed to be that they are not getting enough of it: they want services broadened.

Their results are summarized in the following table:

User Attitudes Toward IRCs
Statewide: 1973-74

Percent with Positive Attitudes

	Group			
Attitudes	EMR (N=245)	LBD (N=163)	PS/SLH (N=137)	Low Incidence (N=150)
Like	90%	85%	80%	75%
Useful	82	78	79	66
Responsive	76	79	78	62
Sympathetic	73	70	73	63
Practical	67	62	57	47
Current	65	56	53	45
Broad	53	41	38	39

What Services Are Most Helpful?

Borrowing instructional materials tops the list for most users. Training ranks next, followed by dissemination of information, and development of instructional materials. Evaluating instructional materials ranks a poor fifth. But most users think most services are helpful: a majority of all four groups of special educators questioned labelled all five services wither "very helpful" or "helpful." Only the PS/SLH and Low Incidence groups express serious reservations, and then only about the evaluation of instructional materials and the development of such materials. Even so, a sizeable minority find those two services helpful.

The four groups differ somewhat in their overall appraisal of the services, with EMR teachers declaring them most helpful, followed by LBD, PS/SLH, and Low Incidence teachers, in that order.

The Division leadership has exerted considerable influence over the IRCs over the past year or more to require a more balanced configuration of services. Originally, the IRCs were created as materials-loaning centers. The Division has actively encouraged the centers to expand their work by supplying training in association with the loaning of materials. It is clear that the IRC Coordinators have responded to the Division's initiative and have added their own. The result is that training now ranks second to borrowing materials as a helpful service in the eyes of the users. The emergence of training as a used and valued service has occurred in a period of one year, while loaning materials is a service that dates back to the last decade. Given the rapid emergence of training as something users value, it is possible that a year from now it will draw the top rating as a helpful service. The table below gives details.

User Attitudes Toward IRC Services
Statewide: 1973-74

	Group							
	EMR (N=245)		LBD (N=163)		PS/SLH (N=137)		Low Incidence (N=150)	
	VH*	H*	VH*	H*	VH*	H*	VH*	H*
Borrowing Materials	54%	28%	46%	31%	38%	24%	36%	23%
Training & Staff Development	45	36	36	34	43	26	23	28
Dissemination of Information	37	46	28	47	35	32	21	41
Development of Materials	29	39	22	37	21	26	15	26
Dissemination & Evaluation of Materials	20	43	16	36	20	26	13	23

*VH - Very Helpful; H - Helpful

How Do the Users Want Access to the IRCs?

They want to telephone their requests in and have a messenger service bring materials to them. No other combination of making a request and receiving the materials comes even close to this first choice. For example, various user groups consider telephone calls two, three, and four times as helpful as sending letters. There are no appreciable differences among the four groups in the way they rate the helpfulness of different ways of gaining access as shown below.

It is noteworthy that while the questionnaire asks about access to any IRC services, the users answered in terms of getting materials--the original and still most valued IRC service.

User Attitude Toward Methods of Access to IRCs
Statewide: 1973-74
Percent Liking Method of Access

Method of Access	Group EMR (N=245)	LBD (N=163)	PS/SLH (N=137)	Low Incidence (N=150)
Messenger Service	55%	61%	45%	45%
Telephone Calls	55	58	68	43
Go to IRC	44	31	34	33
IRC Staff Comes to School	41	44	43	45
Computer Terminal	39	35	36	28
Satellite Center	27	25	28	13
Mail a Request	25	25	15	23

How Does Distance Influence the IRC User?

Over 80 percent of the users live within 40 miles of their IRCs; over 35 percent are within ten miles. At the extremes a handful work in the buildings where the IRCs are located and another handful work over 100 miles away.

User Distance from the IRCs
Statewide: 1973-74

Distance	Group EMR (N=245)	LBD (N=163)	PS/SLH (N=137)	Low Incidence (N=150)
In the same building	1%	3%	4%	2%
Within 5 miles	16	16	12	20
6 - 10 miles	21	16	19	19
11 - 20 miles	22	21	26	20
21 - 30 miles	9	18	18	11
31 - 40 miles	12	8	8	5
41 - 50 miles	7	7	4	1
51 - 75 miles	6	6	2	4
75 - 100 miles	--	1	1	1
More than 100 miles	--	--	--	1
Don't know	6	4	6	16

What is the effect of these distances on what the users know about the IRCs, how much they use them, and how helpful they find them?

The Effect of Distance on Knowledge

IRCs tend to be best known by users who are either extremely close (within the same building) or extremely distant (more than 50 miles away). Special educators who work within a range of five to 50 miles know the least about the IRCs. There is at least one possible explanation:

1. Special educators within the IRC building are more aware of the IRC and its services because they are immediately visible. They have more informal contact with the IRC staff, and therefore know more about

the IRC. Special educators who are over 50 miles away tend to live in sparsely-populated (perhaps rural) school districts with few services; thus they turn to the IRCs for the help that is not available locally. However, special educators within the five to 50 mile range may have access to other services within their own school districts, and thus do not need the IRCs as much as those who live far away, or know as much as those who live very close.

But despite these differences, a heavy majority of the users in all four groups studied say that they know either "a lot" or "some things" about their IRCs. The EMR teachers are best informed, followed by the LBD, Low Incidence and PS/SLH groups, in that order as shown below.

User Knowledge About the IRCs
Statewide: 1973-74

	Group							
	EMR (N=245)		LBD (N=163)		PS/SLH (N=137)		Low Incidence (N=150)	
Distance	Know A Lot	Know Some Things	Know A Lot	Know Some Things	Know A Lot	Know Some Things	Know A Lot	Know Some Things
In the building	100%	--	60%	20%	40%	40%	33%	67%
Within 5 miles	26	58	15	54	12	58	23	58
6 - 20 miles	30	62	25	54	16	42	10	63
21 - 50 miles	31	59	26	53	29	47	36	28
51 - 100 miles	40	53	40	30	--	75	50	25
More than 100 miles	--	100	--	--	--	--	--	--
Don't know	13	31	17	33	--	22	4	13

The Effect of Distance on Use

Users who are nearest to the IRCs (within their building) and farthest away (more than 50 miles) tend to make more use of the Centers than those who are five to 50 miles away. The reason for this is presumably the same as the reason for the differences in what they know

about the IRCs, as reported above. Of course, knowledge reinforces use and use reinforces knowledge. We are undoubtedly looking at two sides of the same coin.

There are not appreciable differences in this pattern among the four groups studied as shown in the following table.

Use of the IRCs
Statewide: 1973-74

	Group							
	EMR (N=245)		LBD (N=163)		PS/SLH (N=137)		Low Incidence (N=150)	
Distance	A Lot*	Often**	A Lot*	Often**	A Lot*	Often**	A Lot*	Often**
In the building	67%	--	80%	--	40%		67%	33%
Within 5 miles	24	8	19	19	18	18	19	13
6 - 20 miles	20	24	24	26	13	15	10	10
21 - 50 miles	25	18	17	23	24	12	8	8
51 - 100 miles	32	27	40	20	25	--	13	25
More than 100 miles	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Don't know	--	13	--	17	11	--	4	4

*A Lot - More than once a month
**Often - Once a month

Relation of Distance to Helpfulness of Specific IRC Services

A very careful examination of questionnaire responses shows that the users nearest (within the building) and farthest (more than 50 miles away) tend to rate various IRC services as being more helpful than those in the 5-50 mile range. While this pattern is not as clear for specific services as it is for the IRC as a whole, it is apparent nevertheless. Presumably the reason for this is the same as that offered earlier in the discussion of distance related to knowledge and use. (Inasmuch as the data for this conclusion appear in 20 separate tables, they are not presented here.)

WHAT IRC SERVICES DO THEY USE AND WANT?

Most special educators in Ohio say they know "a lot" or at least "some things" about their IRCs. The figures for the four groups studied are 87 percent for the EMR teachers, 76 percent for the LBD teachers, 65 percent for the Low Incidence teachers, and 63 percent for the PS/SLH users.

Also, most special educators use IRC services at least once every two months. The figures for the four groups studied are 63 percent for the LBD teachers, 62 percent for the EMR teachers, 45 percent for the PS/SLH teachers, and 42 percent for the Low Incidence teachers. A sizeable minority of the special educators use their IRC more than once a month. This is true for 23 percent of the LBD teachers, 22 percent of the EMR teachers, 18 percent of the PS/SLH teachers, and 12 percent of the Low Incidence teachers.

To assess the impact of the IRCs on special educators throughout the State and to assist the Division in planning future activities, PSE analyzed what the 695 special educators said about the current use and value and about the potential use and value of all 34 services listed on the questionnaire. We compiled four lists of services. Only those which met the following criteria appear on the following four lists:

1. Services with High Current Use and High Potential Use--
   Only those services which get more than average use and have more than average value to the CURRENT users in a region, and which have more than average appeal and value to the POTENTIAL users in that region appear on this list.

2. Services with Low Current Use but High Potential Use--
   Only those services which get less than average use and have less than average value to the CURRENT users in a region but which have more than average appeal and value to the POTENTIAL users in that region appear on this list.

3. Services with High Current Use but Low Potential Use--
   Only those services which get more than average use and have more than average value to the CURRENT users in a region but which have less than average appeal and value to the POTENTIAL users in that region appear on this list.

4. Services with Low Current Use and Low Potential Use--
   Only those services which get less than average use and have less than average value to the CURRENT users in a region and which have less than average appeal and value to the POTENTIAL users in that region appear on this list.

Services with High Current Use and High Potential Use

As already mentioned, only those services which have more than average use, appeal, and value are included in this category. They have, in our opinion, the highest potential for growth. They are already being enthusiastically used and they are endorsed highly by those who are not yet using them.

Training Activities Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Prescriptions of specific teaching activities, skills, and/or strategies	9
Use of behavioral techniques	3
Assessment of individual child functioning (academic, social, and/or developmental levels)	2
Use of community agencies and other non-school resources	2
Training parents in working with children at home	1

One of the frontiers of special education today is prescriptive teaching using behavioral techniques based on an assessment of individual child functioning. It is indicative of the currency and high quality of IRC services that special educators in nine out of 16 regions are already making high use of training in prescriptive teaching and are eager for more. The smaller number of regions singling out behavioral techniques can be traced partly to the fact that six regions already make high use of IRC training in these techniques but do not feel a need for more. The same can be said about the small number of regions singling out assessment of individuals. Three other regions already make high use of IRC training in assessment techniques, but don't want more. (Only those services with both high current use and high potential use are on this list.)

Many regions expressed very strong interest in being trained in the use of community agencies and other non-school resources and in training parents in working with children at home. However, such training is not widely used at present. Thus it does not rank highly on this particular table.

Developing Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Assistance to teachers in creating new materials when commercially produced products are not available (teacher-made materials)	3

(High Use/High Potential--Continued)

Special educators are less interested in creating new materials than modifying existing materials, as shown later. Nevertheless, three regions make above-average use of IRC help in creating materials and are eager for more of the same. (Four other regions make low use of such a service currently, but they are enthusiastic about getting started, as shown later.)

Loaning Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Messenger service to pick up requests for materials and services and deliver information back to the school	2
Language arts materials	1
Perceptual/motor materials	1

Few regions have an official messenger service to deliver materials. It is an important service, both to these two regions and to others as we will see later. Almost everybody is already getting the materials he wants. That is why only one region wants to expand this service. This seems to be solid evidence that the IRCs have largely met the materials demands of the special educators. And that the Division was wise to lead the IRCs into offering training and other non-materials services. (More about this later.)

Services with Low Current Use but with High Potential Use

There is also a high potential for growth among the services in this category. Although they are not yet used by many, they are of interest to a large number of respondents who place more than average value on them. However, because the services do not have a history of high use by a lot of special educators, they are, to a certain extent, untried. For this reason, these services have, in our opinion, slightly less potential for growth than those services which are already widely used and valued (therefore proven) and of wide interest to all--these services must be tested with all users.

Possible Future Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
A computer terminal at the school to get education prescriptions for individual children	16

(Low Use/High Potential--Continued)

Possible Future Services: (Continued)	Number of Regions Selecting Service
A computer or a computer terminal at the school to access information about materials and services	11
Have the Instructional Resource Center do research based on your ideas	8

The most remarkable single finding of this entire study is perhaps the fact that special educators in all 16 regions chose a computer terminal at the school as a most-wanted service--despite the fact that in none of the 16 regions does such a service exist today. Out of the 34 services listed on the questionnaire, this is the only service selected by all 16 regions. Thus it has the highest growth potential of all. This finding fits perfectly with the earlier finding that special educators are eager for training in prescriptive teaching using behavioral techniques based on an assessment of individual child functioning. (Apparently a magic training combination for special educators.) The finding is further reinforced for the fact that 11 regions singled out a computer or a computer terminal at their school to access information about materials and services. (The fact that 16 wanted prescriptions for individual children while 11 wanted information about materials and services is worth noting. Evidently getting information about the IRC is less of a problem than knowing what to do with individual children.)

The fact that a computer terminal or computer outstripped virtually every other service suggests that IRC users think this is the solution to getting access to the IRCs. Earlier, we reported that the favored method of gaining access to materials was to telephone a request to the IRC and have a messenger service meet the request. A computer terminal linking teachers to the IRC could eventually eliminate both the telephone and the messenger service. An ideal computerized system could provide instantaneous services to the user.

There is virtually no use of model classrooms by the IRCs today to demonstrate good techniques. Despite this, special educators in 11 regions--an extraordinarily high number--asked that their IRCs operate model classrooms for them to observe. Clearly, this kind of practical, down-to-earth help would be welcomed.

And special educators in eight regions--also a high number--asked that their IRCs conduct research based on their ideas. This service is practically nonexistent today.

(Low Use/High Potential--Continued)

It is extremely impressive that special educators in from eight to 16 regions expressed a strong desire for four services that are not now available. We included five "nonexistent" services in the questionnaire--merely a few examples--to test the mood of special educators for expanded services. The five were not selected systematically; they are only a random sampling of many possibilities. The users were discriminating; that is, one new service was selected by 16 regions, two new services by 11 regions, and one new service by eight regions. One service was rejected entirely. Users were asked how they would like to have most or all of their materials come from the IRC. This novelty was soundly rejected by 11 out of 16 regions. Presumably, the users think that idea is impractical or inconvenient or too expensive or all three. Thus not everything new appeals to the users.

We interpret this to mean that there is strong growth potential for brand new services. And not only for those used merely as examples in the questionnaire, but for others yet to be invented.

Training Activities Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Training parents in working with children at home	11
Use of community agencies and other non-school resources	7
Communication with students and interpresonal relationships	2
Classroom organization and structure	1
Assessment of individual child functioning (academic, social, and/or developmental)	1

It is obvious that special educators want to know how to train parents to work with children at home. This service is singled out by 11 regions--a very high number. Fewer regions asked for training in how to use community agencies and other outside resources, a non-school service as is training parents to work with their own children. One can interpret the difference between 11 regions and 7 regions as signifying that special educators think that the very best non-school resource for a handicapped child is his own parents.

(Low Use/High Potential--Continued)

Developing Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Assistance to teachers in modifying standard materials or equipment when commercially produced products are not available	11
Assistance to teachers in creating new materials when commercially produced products are not available (teacher-made materials)	4

As reported, special educators are more interested in modifying existing materials than in creating new materials. It is clear that in 11 regions--a very high number-- they are not now getting as much help in modifying materials as they want, since this service has high potential, but low current use.

Loaning Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Getting supplementary instructional materials for parents to use at home	11
Messenger service to pick up requests for materials and services and deliver information back to the school	4

The fact that 11 out of 16 regions are not now getting but are eager to have materials for parents reinforces the earlier finding that 11 regions want the IRCs to help them train parents in working with children at home.

The importance of a messenger service for certain regions (some already have it) was discussed earlier. At least until a sophisticated computerized system with local school terminals can be installed, special educators think that a messenger service to pick up requests and deliver materials is the next best thing.

Evaluating Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Getting copies of evaluations of materials by classroom teachers	3
Getting the Center to review materials before purchase by the school district	2

(Low Use/High Potential--Continued)

Special educators are not interested in getting help from their IRCs in evaluating materials. They are not asking the IRC professional staff members to do this and they are not asking the IRCs to collect such evaluations from classroom teachers. (Some earlier attempts by the IRCs to collect such evaluations from classroom teachers failed and were abandoned.) Even in those few regions that expressed an above-average interest, there is low use of evaluation services at present.

This service area aroused the lowest response--both as to current use and as to future use--of any of the seven studies. Whether this can be traced to lack of initiative by the IRC staffs (there have been some attempts, as we said) or simply a general belief that the special educator can judge materials for himself is not clear from this study. What is clear is that if the Division leadership wants the IRCs to help special educators evaluate materials, the Division will have to take more initiative in establishing such evaluations.

Providing Information About IRC Materials:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Consulting with Center staff about selecting and using instructional materials	1

In an least half the regions, special educators are already making high use of information about IRC materials and services (see below). For example, 13 regions--an extraordinarily high number-- report that special educators are looking at materials at the IRCs. This probably explains why there is little growth potential for this service. Most users seem to be getting what they need.

Services with High Current Use but with Low Potential Use

Loaning Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Reading	12
Mathematics	11
Language arts	10
Perceptual/motor skills	9
Social studies	4
Messenger service to pick up requests for materials and services and deliver information back to the school	4

(High Use/Low Potential--Continued)

Loaning Materials Services: (Continued)	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Professional literature	2
Science	1
Occupational/Vocational	1

The current high use of reading, language arts, mathematics, and perceptual/motor materials is quite evident. Not evident from this table, but displayed later, is the current low use of materials for teaching recreational skills such as art, music, and physical education, materials for teaching occupations and vocations, and materials for teaching science. This pattern shows a clear discrimination by special educators as to the kinds of materials they want the IRCs to supply. The data clearly suggest that special educators are already getting the materials they want. Thus, loaning materials can be regarded as a service with little growth potential. The only exception was reported earlier: supplementary instructional materials for parents to use at home. Most regions--11 out of 16--do not make high use of this service at present but want it in the future.

Providing Information About the IRC Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Publications such as Instructional Resource Center newsletters, bulletins, evaluation reports, and catalogs	12
Individual consultation in such areas as the use of Instructional Resource Center materials and services (by phone, mail, or in person)	10

It is quite clear that most regions are getting the information they think they need about their IRC, either through written materials or through individual consultation. Thus, this is not a significant growth area for IRC services.

Providing Information About IRC Materials:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Looking at materials at the Center	13
Consulting with Center staff about selecting and using instructional materials	8
Mail delivery of information about materials and services	6

(High Use/Low Potential--Continued)

The pattern is much the same as that noted above. That is, about half the regions already make high use of these information sources. It is worth noting that the most common method is to look at materials at the Center--despite the fact that virtually all users travel some distance (from a few miles to a great many miles) to use this particular method. Thr origins of the IRCs as materials libraries are still apparent--and that role is still appreciated by the users.

Training Activities Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Assistance in the use of media, equipment, and/or materials (books, tapes, overhead projections, etc.)	9
Use of behavioral techniques	6
Specifying and implementing individual educational/social objectives	5
Assessment of individual child functioning (academic, social and/or developmental levels)	3
Prescriptions of specific teaching activities, skills, and/or strategies	1
Use of community agencies and other non-school resources	1
Classroom organization and structure	1

As might be expected, the most-used training is in the use of media, equipment, and materials. Many IRCs started their training programs with this topic and then expanded into other areas. The strong interest of special educators in behavioral objectives and behavioral techniques is apparent. The growth potential of these three training services is not great. The same is true for training in classroom organization and structure. Most users presumably feel that they already know how to do this or can learn it elsewhere.

In contrast, the high growth potential of training in using community agencies and other non-school resources and training in writing prescriptions of specific teaching activities, skills, and/or strategies was reported earlier.

(High Use/Low Potential--Continued)

Developing Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Assistance to teachers in creating new materials when commercially produced products are not available (teacher-made materials)	2

Only two regions report high use and low growth potential for this service. But seven other regions, as already reported, credit this service with high growth potential.

Services with Low Current Use and Low Potential Use

The services in this category, which are used by few, of interest to few and of value to few, have obviously little potential for growth. The IRC should be careful about investing in services which special educators say they are not using, do not want and do not value.

Loaning Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Recreation skills such as art, music, and physical education	13
Occupational/vocational	11
Science	9
Social studies	5
Professional literature	3
Mathematics	1
Messenger service to pick up requests for materials and services and deliver information back to the school	1

The first three listed are the unused and unwanted services. Evidently, special educators feel that materials in these subject fields are not suitable for most handicapped children.

In contrast, the last two services are either enjoying high use (mathematics materials) in most regions or have good growth potential (messenger service).

(Low Use/Low Potential--Continued)

Possible Future Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Have most or all of your materials or services come from the Instructional Resource Center	11

There is no present and no future for such a concept, according to special educators in 11 regions--a very high number. As already reported, this is one service that almost nobody uses and almost nobody wants. The inconveniences and high cost of the concept, given the absence of sophisticated computer equipment, are obvious.

Training Activities Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Classroom organization and structure	6
Communication with students and interpersonal relatiohships	1

As already noted, most special educators think that they do not need help from the IRC with either of these matters.

Evaluating Materials Services:	Number of Regions Selecting Service
Getting the Center to review materials before purchase by the school district	2

The low level of interest in such a service has already been discussed.

Summary of Growth Potential for All IRC Services Studied

The table on the next three pages ranks each of the 34 IRC services--present services and possible future services--in order of growth potential. The table can be read as follows:

Top-ranked services (value from 30 to 45) can be regarded as having high growth potential. Some are already enjoying high use, as is the case with prescriptions of specific teaching activities, skills, and/or strategies. Most are not, as is the case with having a computer terminal at the school to get educational presctiptions for individual children. But in either case, special educators in most regions throughout the state are eager to have them in the future.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Value*	IRC Services Ranked in Order of Growth Potential
45	A computer terminal at the school to get educational prescriptions for individual children.
41	Training in prescriptions of specific teaching activities, skills, and/or strategies.
38	Training parents in working with children at home.
35	Providing assistance to teachers in modifying standard materials or equipment when commercially produced products are not available.
35	Getting supplementary instructional materials for parents to use at home.
35	A computer or a computer terminal at the school to access information about materials and services.
35	Have the Instructional Resource Center operate a model classroom for you to observe.
34	Training in use of community agencies and other non-school resources.
32	Providing assistance to teachers in creating new materials when commercially produced products are not available.
30	Messenger service to pick up requests for materials and services and deliver information back to the school.
29	Have the Instructional Resource Center do research based on your ideas.
28	Training in the use of behavioral techniques.
26	Language arts materials.

*This is a statistical index computed to show the relative standing of each service. It has no other meaning.

Value*	IRC Services Ranked in Order of Growth Potential
26	Looking at materials at the Center.
25	Perceptual/motor materials.
25	Publications such as Instructional Resource Center newsletters, bulletins, evaluation reports, catalogues.
25	Reading materials.
24	Training in assessment of individual child functioning (academic, social and/or developmental levels).
23	Consulting with Center staff about selecting and using instructional materials.
23	Individual consultation in such areas as the use of Instructional Resource Center materials and services.
23	Mathematics materials.
22	Training in assistance in the use of media, equipment and/or materials.
19	Getting copies of evaluations of materials by classroom teachers.
19	Mail delivery of information about materials and services.
18	Training in specifying and implementing individual educational/social objectives.
16	Training in communication with students and interpersonal relationships.
15	Getting the Center to review materials before purchase by the school district.
12	Social studies materials.
12	Professional literature
10	Training in classroom organization and structure
6	Science materials.

Value*	IRC Services Ranked in Order of Growth Potential
3	Occupational/vocational materials.
2	Have most or all of your materials or services come from the Instructional Resource Center.
0	Recreational skills materials.

Middle-ranked services (value from 22 to 29) have low growth potential but are widely used, widely appreciated, and should be continued.

Low-ranked services (value from 1 to 19) have little growth potential. The primary reason for this is lack of interest on the part of speical educators, as is the case for example, with materials for teaching recreation skills such as art, music, and physical education, a service which special educators in 13 regions--an extraordinarily high number--went out of their way to identify as something that they did not get from their IRCs and do not want. But in a few cases, as in getting training in specifying and implementing individual educational/social objectives, special educators are already making fairly high use of these services.

While the findings presented in this final summary table hold true for the State as a whole and should prove useful to the Division as general policy guidance, the specific findings for each of the 16 regional IRCs--findings which appear in 16 separate reports, one for each region--will be more useful in making fine-grained decisions about what services to stop, what to continue, and what to start in each of the 16 regions.

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE IRCS

We conclude with a few general management-level questions about the IRCs and with the answers that are possible within the limits of this particular study.

Are the IRCs supplying the right services?

Yes. Supplying special education materials and training to special educators are the services given and the services wanted. Special educators use both kinds and they want more of both kinds in the future. They also want some new services.

Do the IRCs serve their entire geographic regions even-handedly?

Yes. The highest use of IRC services is made by special educators within the building housing the IRC and by those more than 50 miles away. There is less use by those in the 5-50 mile range suggested earlier. In any case, there is no evidence of geographic favoritism.

Is the IRC a professional "club" for special educators in the region or does it give services that affect teaching and learning?

Certainly it gives services that can have a very direct influence on teaching and learning. And the most-wanted future services are precisely targeted on teaching and learning. The closer a service comes to helping a special educator with an individual child, the more eagerly they seek it. While the IRCs do perhaps provide a sense of identity to the special educators, we regard that as highly desirable for this particular group of professionals, who often work in relative isolation from other educators in their own school buildings and school districts.

What should the IRCs do that they are not now doing?

They should give training in prescriptive teaching, using behavioral techniques based on an assessment of individual child functioning. They should train parents in working with children at home and should supply materials for parents to use at home. They should give training in how to use community agencies and other non-school resources for handicapped children. They should operate, sponsor, or identify model classrooms for special educators to observe. They should help teachers modify standard materials and create new ones when nothing already exists. They should make better use of messenger services to get materials back and forth.

Is Ohio getting its money's worth in financing the IRCs?

Yes. IRC staff members appear to be hard-working, productive, resourceful, and professionally aggressive. Materials they have collected for inspection and borrowing are generally well chosen.

Would twice as much money do twice as much good?

Probably so. The present size of the IRC staffs, training budgets, and materials collections are small relative to the numbers of special educators they are trying to serve. Double the money would probably produce double the effect.

Is there a better way to allocate the money throughout the State?

We cannot think of any. Eight centers or 32 centers would be no better--and quite possibly worse--than the present 16 centers. The money seems to be fairly allocated among the 16 centers, so far as we could determine, without making a direct study of IRC financial patterns. While based on this study, this can not be stated absolutely. No IRC seemed to be much better off or worse off financially than the others.

What should the Division do that it is not doing?

It should use the results of the 16 regional studies to encourage the IRCs to phase out low-utility and low-value services and shift their funds into high-utility and high-value services. It should sponsor a small-scale experiment linking a school to an IRC through a computer with terminals; we do not recommend even a large-scale experiment at this time. It should examine the effectiveness of the Program Planning and Development Centers and it should proceed to make the PPDCs and the IRCs mutually reinforcing.

APPENDIX

SERVICES LISTED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE ORGANIZED BY SERVICE AREA

Service Area 1: Providing Information About the IRC

- Disseminating information through publications such as Instructional Resource Center newsletters, bulletins, evaluation reports, catalogs, and so on
- Disseminating information through providing individual consultation in such areas as the use of Instructional Resource Center materials and services (by phone, mail, or in person)

Service Area 2: Providing Information About IRC Materials

- Providing mail delivery of information about materials and services
- Consulting with Center staff about selecting and using instructional materials
- Looking at materials at the Center

Service Area 3: Developing Materials

- Developing materials through providing assistance to teachers in modifying standard materials or equipment when commercially produced materials are not available
- Developing materials through providing assistance to teachers in creating new materials when commercially produced materials are not available

Service Area 4: Loaning Materials

- Language arts
- Mathematics
- Occupational/Vocational
- Perceptual/Motor
- Reading
- Recreation skills such as art, music, and physical education
- Science

Service Area 4: Loaning Materials (cont'd.)

- Social studies
- Professional literature
- Supplementary instructional materials for parents to use at home
- Messenger service to pick up requests for materials and services and deliver them back to the school

Service Area 5: Evaluating Materials

- Getting the Center to review materials before purchase by the school district
- Getting copies of evaluations of materials by classroom teachers

Service Area 6: Training Activities

- Child assessment of individual child functioning (academic, social and/or developmental levels)
- Prescriptions of specific teaching activities, skills and/or strategies
- Use of behavioral techniques
- Assistance in the use of media, equipment and/or materials (books, tapes, overhead projections, etc.)
- Specifying and implementing individual educational/social objectives
- Communication with students and interpersonal relationships
- Classroom organization and structure
- Use of community agencies and other non-school resources
- Training parents in working with children at home

Service Area 7: Possible Future Services

- A computer or a computer terminal at the school to access information about materials and services
- A computer terminal at the school to get educational prescriptions for individual children

Service Area 7: Possible Future Services (cont'd.)

- Have most or all of your materials or services come from the Instructional Resource Center
- Have the Instructional Resource Center operate a model classroom for you to observe
- Have the Instructional Resource Center do research based on your ideas

SITE VISITORS

Site Visitor	Regions
Dr. LeRoy Aserlind Department of Behavioral Studies University of Wisconsin Madison, Wisconsin	Summit, Medina, Portage Trumbull, Ashtabula, Mahoning
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Ms. Susan Wong Policy Studies in Education New York, New York	West Central Northwest
Dr. William S. Wright Director, Project SEARCH Department of Special Education University of Kentucky Lexington, Kentucky	West Central Northwest

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Being evaluated is not really pleasant even in the best of circumstances. But, being evaluated can border on the unpleasant when the evaluators ask for a lot of help. It is bad enough to have to await the results; it is worse to have to help supply the results. Thus, the staff of PSE writes this note of gratitude to all those Ohioans who not only had to await the results of this study, but who had to help supply the results.

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